



# Alabama Touring Artist Program

**FREE PERFORMANCES**

Formerly  
The Rural School Touring Program



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**[www.arts.alabama.gov](http://www.arts.alabama.gov)**

# ALABAMA TOURING ARTIST PROGRAM

## APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS

Schools that have received an invitation to apply for the Alabama Touring Artist Program may apply using the School Application. (If you have not received an invitation but would like to apply, please contact Arts in Education Program Manager, Diana F. Green at [diana.green@arts.alabama.gov](mailto:diana.green@arts.alabama.gov) or call 334-242-4076 Ext. 241) This Application is available from our brochure and on our website. Digital copies that may be filled out on a computer are available by email at the above address. Once an application has been completed, it must be signed by the authorizing official at the school (usually the principal) and a School Coordinator (A person at the school who will facilitate all communications with the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the assigned artist). Please be sure the contact information on the application is clear and accurate. If the contact person should change during the process of the grant application and implementation, please notify the Council of that change.

Please use the Roster in the Alabama Touring Artist Brochure to select a first, second, and if possible 3rd choice for your school. Whenever we can, we will match your choices to your school. However, due to a need to balance artist assignments, you may be assigned an artist that you do not list on your application. You will be assigned an artist listed in our Roster, and we will make sure the performance is age appropriate for your school. All of our artists have experience in the schools and in this program, so you may be assured of the quality of all performers. If you have any concerns, please contact us. Our goal is to make sure your students have a positive arts experience.

Performances are typically held between February and May. If you need an earlier date, please check with the program manager (below). Occasionally performances may be scheduled for January, but this must be at the discretion of the artist, since payment may not be guaranteed until February. In all cases this funding covers one performance intended for a general assembly of your student body and does not include individual class performances or workshops. In some cases, two performances may be scheduled back-to-back to accommodate large numbers of students, but these performances must be scheduled within a 3 hour time frame to allow the performers time to schedule additional activities on the performance date. Please indicate if you will need more than one performance in the appropriate space on your school application.

Applications may be mailed, faxed, or scanned and emailed to:

Diana F. Green, Arts in Education Program Manager  
Alabama State Council on the Arts  
201 Monroe Street, Suite 110  
Montgomery, AL 36130-1800  
FAX: 334-240-3269  
[diana.green@arts.alabama.gov](mailto:diana.green@arts.alabama.gov)

# ARTIST ROSTER

## **Kindergarten - 6th Grade**

CHRISTI STRICKLAND TOYER  
Storytelling (Music, Theatre, Dance)

NATHIFA DANCE COMPANY & OUTREACH, INC.  
West African Dance and Drum

SUDHA RAGHURAM  
West Indian Dance

## **6th - 12th Grade**

ERIC ESSIX  
Music (Jazz Guitar)

RON MCCALL Theatre  
(Monologues)

# CHRISTI STRICKLAND TOYER

## Theatre



The performance of Fun Fables and Fantastic Folktales is a work based on the tales of Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox and the Little Boy who cried Wolf. The performance (45 minutes) is crafted with song, dance, and drama. The presentation is interactive incorporating storytelling, demonstration, and response as elements of the performance. The students will be taught a song and dance to sing along with the performers as part of the presentation. A pre-selected student will also receive the opportunity to rehearse and perform with the cast during the presentation.

The lessons taught are a blend of General Music, Theatre and Dance Standards from

the Alabama Course of Studies for grades Pre-K to 6th including Singing age appropriate music alone/ with others (M-4), Recognizing and practicing acceptable audience behavior (T-4), and Combining two or more locomotor movements in a repeating pattern (D-4).

The Presentation will be followed by a 10 to 15 minute talk back session for the students to ask questions of the artist and to be asked questions by the artist.

**Age Group:** Grades K-6

**Technical Requirements:** 25' x 20' performance space

CHRISTI STRICKLAND TOYER (Actor/Director) received a BA in Theatre Arts from Alabama State University. She continued her study in a three-year professional internship at the St. Louis Black Repertory Theatre Company (St. Louis, Missouri).

Mrs. Toyer holds professional credits as an actor, stage manager, makeup artist, wig stylist, and director. She is the founder and Artistic Director of the Birmingham based Plays on the Go Touring Company (PGTC). PGTC presents plays from their children's repertoire in elementary schools throughout Jefferson County, and also produces/programs acting classes, theatre workshops and drama residencies for grades 3-8

MELISSA BALDWIN (Actor/Production Assistant) studied Theatre Arts at Alabama State University under Dr. Tonea Stewart. Since 2005, she has performed regularly with the Birmingham Children's Theatre, Summerfest Musical Theatre, Terrific New Theatre, Magic City Actors Theatre, and Milk & Cookies production Company.





# NATHIFA DANCE COMPANY & OUTREACH, INC.

## Dance



"Dance Africa" explains the stories of life using movement of African dance and drumming. Dance Africa, performed with two to three drummers for a complete ensemble, gives dances fullness and energy. African drums include the djembe, the mother drum, and doun-doun ba, the father drum. Drumming is the traditional way of telling the stories. Dances include those from Mali, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Guinea. NDC's in-school performances entertain,

educate and engage the audience with handout material, hands on instruments, song and dance. NDC adapts performances to fit each grade level. The performances are generally 45 minutes long.

**Age Group:** Grades K-12

**Technical requirements:** 12' x 24' performance space.( Wooden gym floors allow the dancers to feel free and are the best for the bodies of the dancers.)

Two microphones for drummers and one for the facilitator.

## LAVONDIA BRYANT

SQUARE began her extensive theatre and dance training in West African dance. She studied in Modern dance in Brooklyn, NY with Al Ferryman, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, Giwayen Mata, and King Sundiata Keite. Her training has led her to the directorship of Nathifa Dance Company, Inc. choreographing performances including: JCCEO Yes Ambassadors, For Colored Girls, and Black Nativity. She is also a recipient of the Fellowship Award from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.



DENNIS HARRIS began drumming at a young age. His journey as a drummer started with master drummer Harold 'Atu' Murray. He has performed with Birmingham African Dance Coalition, Sundiata Keita, of the Omawale African Cultural Society, Umdabu South African Dance Company, and SculptureEssence. He is one of the lead drummers for NDC & Outreach, and is skilled in teaching African drumming.

ERIC BOND is a native of Louisville, NY where he began drumming for modern dance and ballet, appearing in the Louisville Ballet Company production of "The Nutcracker" at the age of 10. Mr. Bond has a masters in Public Administration from the University of West Georgia. He is the founder of Tallahassee Drummers Alliance and has drummed for Orchesis Contemporary Dance Theater, Ballethnic Dance Company, "Naakan," created by Burkina Faso, and Artist/ Choreographers Salia Sanou and Seydou Boro. Eric is a member of the percussion ensemble "Dromatala."



# SUDHA RAGHURAM

## Dance



A dance performance for 45 minutes which will include four or five dance items.

A lecture demonstration and power point presentation of dances of India

Dance handout will be given to the children

Age Group: Grades K-12

Technical requirements: A wooden or any hard floor, one mike, a cd player with speakers and a computer video projector.



SUDHA RAGHURAM is a performer, teacher and choreographer of dances of India based in Montgomery, Alabama. She is the Artistic Director of Shiva-laya School of dance. She has more than 30 years of experience in the field of Bharatanatyam-classical dance of India, Kathak, folk dances of India and semi-classical dances of India. She has been the recipient of the Folk Artists Apprenticeship grant awarded by the Alabama State Council on the Arts for eight years. Mrs. Raghuram and her students perform regularly for multicultural events at AUM, ASU and Hunting-ton College, holiday Market, Alabama Dance Festival, Birmingham Museum of Fine Arts, and Indian Associations in Montgomery, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and Auburn. Her students have won prizes and recognition in the PTA Reflections Competition and ACES Competition for school children. Shivalaya School of dance stages dance performances by students every year showcasing the different dance forms of India. Ms. Sudha Raghuram has conducted successful dance workshops at Baldwin Arts Si Academic Magnet Middle School, Andalusia Ballet and Booker T. Washington Magnet High School.



# RONALD MCCALL

## Theatre



"MY BROTHERS AND ME"...is a unique compilation of historical and documented works quilted together through characters created in Old Man Cephus McQueen's stories of his fictional yet truth based brothers. This riveting one-man multi-character drama speaks to the reality of those life denning moments found in the everyday walks of life of the African American male.

Age Group: Grades 6-12

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Technical Requirements: CD player, Audio Speaker and microphone;  
12 x 12 Performance Space

RONALD MCCALL is an award winning actor, recipient of the 2003 Giorgee Award for Best Leading Actor in a Drama. He is also an accomplished vocalist, director and teaching artist. Ronald has a wide range of experience spanning film, television and such theatre credits as Two Wars, Dream Girls, Joe Turner's Come and Gone, Blues For An Alabama Sky, Raisin in The Sun, Crowns, Blues In The Night, Purlie, Five Guys Named Moe, Black Man Live Again and Fences for which the Houston Chronicle wrote... "McCall demonstrates the authoritative presence, dramatic range and variety of delivery and expression needed to fill out the larger-than-life role of Troy Maxson." Film and TV credits include Fried Green Tomatoes, The Heat of the Night, Urban Crossfire, Mutant Species, Sheena, Momma Flora's Family, A Lesson Before Dying, The Rosa Parks Story, Skeleton Key and Honey Dripper. He currently tours with Wideman/Davis Dance NY as one of the principle actors in "The Bends Of Life" which has received great reviews from the New York Times.



As a teaching and performing artist, Ronald is currently providing residencies for K-12 schools in and around the Black Belt area. He also provides arts integration in the classroom, professional development for school teachers, directorial services for school productions and actual performances of his one man show, "My Brothers and Me."



# ERIC ESSIX

## Music



In January 2013, Essix is releasing his 20th album which will be a collection of Negro Spirituals, Civil Rights Movement March songs and original compositions to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 16th Street Church bombing in Birmingham. Essix will be putting a group together that will perform pieces from the album and he plans to include a spoken word element to compliment the musical presentation. The entire program should last about an hour and will not focus on the tragedy or negative aspects of the event itself, but will seek to uplift, show our progress and educate young people about the importance of the music that is a part of the fabric of this country.

Age group:        Grades 6-12

Technical Requirements: 18' x 22' Performance Space with power access

Availability: Any week day

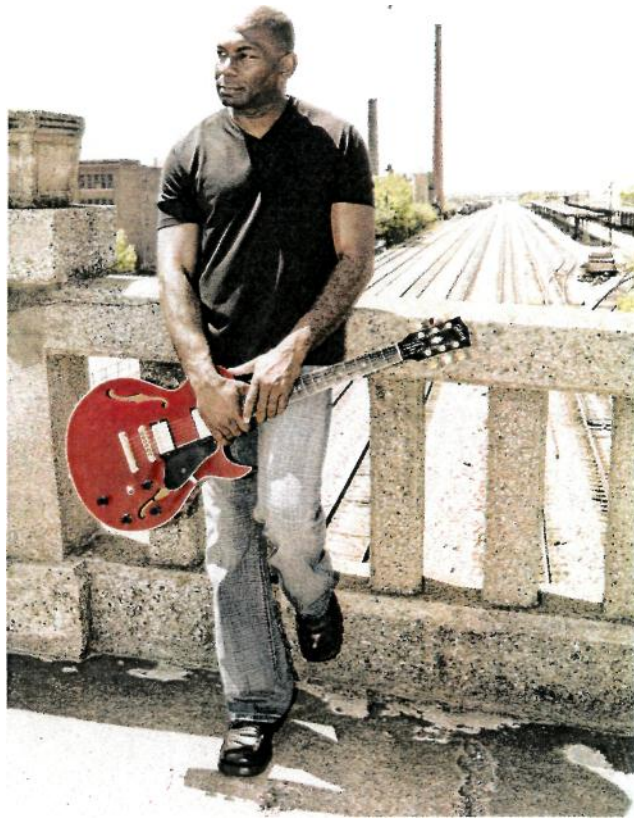


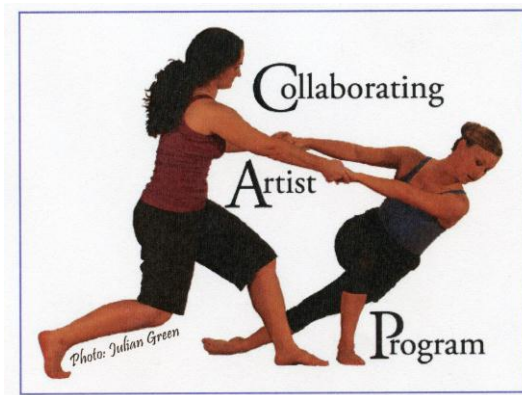
ERIC ESSIX, began his musical experiences hearing the Beatles on Ed Sullivan and singing gospel in the church choir. His grandfather bought him his first guitar and amplifier at the age of 10, which he used to teach himself to play by listening to LPs by Stevie Wonder, The Jackson 5, and Al Green. His first exposure to jazz guitar was Wes Montgomery's, California Dreaming album from the 1960s.

Eric got his first break into the music industry in 1989 when his self-produced album, First Impressions, was picked up for national release by Los Angeles jazz label, Nova Records. Eric has gone on to record a total of 19 records as a solo artist with his 20th set for release in January 2013 entitled, "4".

Eric has had a number of chart topping recordings, his latest being the song Shutdeworth Drive from his 2009 "Birmingham" CD, which was the #1 Independent Jazz Recording for 7 consecutive weeks nationwide on jazz radio. His touring schedule has taken him around the world from India, Ukraine, Hungary and Italy to Mexico, St. Lucia, Granada, and Barbados. Eric has toured extensively with Peabo Bryson, Ronnie Laws, Jeff Lorber, Alex Bugnon, Bob Baldwin, and many others.

In 1991, Eric was the youngest person ever inducted into the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame and is an Alabama Music Hall of Fame Achiever. He has won numerous Best Jazz Musician Awards from Birmingham Magazine, Birmingham Weekly, Black and White Magazine, Boston Magazine and others. He has been the recipient of scholarships and fellowships from the Berklee College of Music and the Alabama State Council on the Arts. In addition to a full touring and recording schedule, Eric currently serves as Artist Coordinator and Program Consultant at the Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center and teaches music production at the Center's Artplay facility at UAB.





The Alabama State Council on the Arts is pleased to announce a new pilot program for Arts in Education. Schools may begin the application process June 15, 2013. Applications will be accepted until funds are expended.

Schools who would like to explore the process of working through the arts to increase student success are invited to apply now for the Collaborating Artist Program. The Program is designed to support schools by offering an innovative way to address a unique challenge identified by each school.

\*The program provides an intensive arts integration experience for a small target group of students and teachers. The Council is committed to provide:

- Trained teaching artists that will work with teachers to design a unit of study together.
- On-going Council support of an arts curriculum consultant throughout the program.
- A program handbook to follow, with clear step-by-step procedures.
- Fully paid artist fees (schools pay artists using grant funding from the Council)

\*School should be willing to commit:

1. Finances:

- Schools pay substitutes to cover teachers' classes for one full day of planning.
- Schools secure materials and supplies needed by the artist (usually no more than \$300 - may find donated items).
- Schools provide travel and accommodations for artists only if the artist resides more than one hour from the school.
- Schools commit to expenses (if any) for a community sharing event and an in-service for full faculty.

2. Personnel:

- A group of 4-6 teachers (in a common grade level or subject area) that are willing to explore new approaches to teaching through the arts. Teachers need to be active in this process. (Note: because teachers are active learners in this program, schools may wish to consider using Title funding for professional development to enhance the program)
- Program coordinator — one school staff person assigned as Council/artist contact and record keeper.

3. Time: school chooses 2, 3 or 4 weeks of daily instruction. Each class meets for this program once each day during the residency. Included is a community sharing event and a full faculty in-service provided by the artist.

To apply contact Diana Green at 334-242-4076, ext. 241 or by email at [diana.green@arts.alabama.gov](mailto:diana.green@arts.alabama.gov)